

PRESS RELEASE

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HIGH FIRE DANGER OVER ROCKY MOUNTAIN AREA

(LAKEWOOD, CO. - August 22, 2011) – In response to the growing wildfire threat, the Rocky Mountain Area Coordination Center has increased the preparedness level (PL) from PL 2 to PL 3. The Rocky Mountain Area (RMA) consists of Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming.

This change in preparedness level was primarily based on current fire activity and the increased risk for large fires across much of Rocky Mountain Area. Hot, dry and windy weather is forecast for much of the week across northern Colorado, most of Wyoming and western South Dakota and Nebraska. Temperatures in the 90's to 100 degrees can be expected with windy conditions and low relative humidity.

Due to these conditions, the Predictive Services unit at the RMACC is forecasting extreme fire danger for most of Wyoming, northeastern Colorado, western Nebraska and western South Dakota. Northwest Colorado and western Kansas and eastern Colorado, to include the Front Range are under high fire danger.

The five Preparedness Levels range from I to V, with V being the highest level. Each Preparedness Level has specific management directions. As the Preparedness Levels rise, more federal, local and state employees become available for fire mobilization if needed.

The Rocky Mountain Area Coordination Group (MAC) establishes Preparedness Levels throughout the calendar year to help assure that firefighting resources are ready to respond to new incidents. Preparedness Levels are dictated by burning conditions, fire activity, and resource availability.

Preparedness Level III – Multiple large incidents are occurring in two or more dispatch zones requiring increased oversight and management. A high potential exists for large fires, as well as increased mobilization of resources within the area and across the nation. This mobilization has, or has the potential to, delay resources and potentially limit the type of resource's that are available.

Although 97% percent of new fires are put out quickly some fires can grow large and impact communities and critical watersheds. Extreme care should be taken by the public when engaging in activities that could start a wildfire. For more information see:

Forecast: <http://gacc.nifc.gov/rmcc/predictive/outlooks.html>

Information on fires in the west can be found at: <http://www.inciweb.org/>

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